

Massachusetts Veterans Transportation Coalition (MVTC)

Almost 400,000 veterans live in Massachusetts, and their need for transportation support to access health care and other services is increasing. The Massachusetts Veterans Transportation Coalition (MVTC) is a collaborative effort to increase awareness and to improve our veterans' transportation options.

MVTC Goals

- **Share information** about the availability of existing transportation resources with veterans and those who serve them
- **Encourage networking and collaboration** among transportation providers and veteran serving agencies to address unmet needs and facilitate opportunities for better coordination
- **Advocate** for veterans' transportation needs

Background

In 2010, staff from the Department of Veterans' Services and the Human Service Transportation Office, which coordinates the community transportation provided by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, recognized the need and formed a workgroup to explore ways to work together. The group quickly expanded to include more state agencies (Executive Office of Elder Affairs and Mass. Department of Transportation) and several Regional Transit Authorities (Cape Cod, Greater Attleboro-Taunton, Montachusett Area, and MetroWest). A representative from the Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association also joined the Coalition.

Activities

The MVTC has compiled transportation information and developed resource materials to help veterans and the organizations that serve them learn about local options that are available. The Coalition also actively outreaches to a variety of audiences, including presenting at statewide Veteran Service Officers (VSO) training conferences and participating in local outreach events (regional VSO meetings, employment fairs, events targeting elder veterans, etc.)

The group also supported a 2011 joint application for the Federal Transit Administration's Veterans Transportation and Community Living Grant, which was recently awarded to the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority and its partners.

The Coalition meets regularly and brings stakeholders together to encourage coordination of resources. If organizations partner on their transportation needs and services, then we can ensure that as many veterans as possible are able to get the rides they need. For example, MVTC members have held initial meetings with the Bedford and Boston VA Hospitals to identify opportunities to collaborate and better coordinate with area transportation providers.

MVTC Resources

1. **Transportation Resources for Veterans in Massachusetts** – a list of available transportation options for veterans across the state online at www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/commissions-and-initiatives/hst/for-veterans.html and linked from several other web pages
2. **Hire a Vet** – information for transportation providers on the benefits of hiring veterans
3. **Outreach Posters and Community Specific Transportation Resource Templates** – for VSOs
4. **Helping Jobseekers in Massachusetts Access Employment-Related Transportation** – for workforce development agencies and others, includes veteran specific information

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